

EDITORIAL COMMENT



A WORD TO HOSPITAL NURSES

We feel very strongly that our JOURNAL lacks items and short papers on new nursing methods. We find it difficult to keep in touch with the changes in treatment of the acute diseases, the changes in technique in operative procedures, the latest remedies in the treatment of shock, and so on. All of such information we look to the hospitals for, and we depend upon the nurses in hospitals to provide. These nurses are saying, especially the very young ones,—“We are not interested in what is going on in other countries. We do not care about organization and registration. We are tired of so much ancient history. What do we care about how things were done twenty-five years ago? We want something interesting and we want something new,”—and our reply can only be: We of the outside world want you to learn by our hard experience. We want you to know the efforts of nurses in other countries who are striving for the advancement of nursing interests, that you may appreciate the greater blessings of our free land. We want you to be ready to take your place in organization work when you join our ranks. We want you to be recognized as members of an honorable profession, to which registration opens the way. We want you, through what history tells you, to appreciate the better conditions under which you are being trained, if you are in a good school, and we want you to know that through the efforts of nurses you have better living accommodations, better food, and shorter hours in your training days than those of the olden times, and to realize that as members of a great army you have taken upon yourselves obligations that you cannot conscientiously escape.

We of the outside look to you for the *new* things. We want to know what new methods of nursing you are being taught to meet the requirements of the advance in medical science. We know that in the leading hospitals all over the country every year brings changes, which the nurses of the outside know nothing about unless you will tell them.

A CHRISTMAS OFFERING

We ask you now at this Christmas season to remember your profession in all its needs and to aid the women who are doing so much for its uplifting by contributing one small effort to the cause. It may be only by giving the encouragement of your presence at a meeting, or by speaking a word in season to some one of influence politically or socially in the cause of registration. It may be only by sending some little item of practical use to those far from the nursing centres, who have only the JOURNAL through which to keep in touch with nursing interests. It may be by writing a paper if your talent lies that way, or by speaking before a woman's club if the opportunity offers. There are a thousand ways that you will think of if you will concentrate your mind upon the subject for an occasional half hour, and then do not forget that the very best Christmas gift that you can send to your friends at home or at a distance is a subscription for a year for the JOURNAL that represents the interests of the nurses of America, that represents your chosen life-work, with which you are

proud to have them keep in touch. At this time, when the spirit of giving is in all hearts, do not forget the profession that calls to you for help.

“A PERFECTLY GOOD NURSE SPOILED”

MR. JACOB REES in one of his lectures tells the following story, which we give without his graphic setting. A little girl, a kitten, and a puppy were in the habit of playing together in a sand-heap. The puppy was very fond of burying the kitten in the sand, but always the child came to the rescue before harm was done. Finally, one day the little girl was not at hand, the kitten was buried, and for want of help in time smothered. When the child discovered that the kitten was dead, she rushed with it in her arms into the house, threw it down at her mother's feet, and with blazing eyes exclaimed, “Look, mamma, a perfectly good cat spoiled.” Mr. Rees used this illustration to show that with the children of the slums, for want of help at the right moment, a perfectly good child might be spoiled, becoming dependent or criminal, as the case may be.

Mrs. Kinney's little paper brings the story to our mind in connection with the “perfectly good nurses” who are “spoiled” by having selected ignorantly a poor school. All of the points that Mrs. Kinney presents so ably will be remedied to some degree by registration. In New York State the great point to be gained will be that all of the training-schools will be placed under the supervision of the Regents. Dr. Ely and Father Hendricks made the *method* clear in their addresses before the State society in Rochester, to be found on another page, which should be studied carefully by our readers.

THE TREND OF OPINION

THESE addresses and the letters from medical societies that are included in the secretary's report are especially valuable at this time, showing, as they do, the trend of public opinion as expressed by Father Hendricks, and of medical opinion as expressed by Dr. Ely and in the letters from the Medical Association. Certainly the nurses of New York are justified in feeling confident of the support of the more highly intelligent citizens of the State, but politics are an uncertain quantity with which to deal, and even if the bill is defeated the first time it is presented to the Legislature, success will come later, when the full value of registration to the public is more widely understood and appreciated.

The bill, given also in this number, of the Illinois State Association of Graduate Nurses is intensely interesting to the nurses of other States, as showing in detail more of the working machinery of registration. In these details every State will differ, according to the laws that govern education and the regulation of the professions.

In New York, for instance, the machinery of the laws governing examinations and registration are so firmly established that it was found unnecessary to give the details in the bill to be presented to the Legislature.

If the nurses of New Jersey, Virginia, and North Carolina can get ready to present their bills this winter, and more publicity can be given to the subject of registration in these five States, even if not one bill is passed, the educational enlightenment which the effort will bring to the public will be of inestimable value. A thing that is worth having is worth working for. Opposition is the most valuable form of advertising that any cause can have, and when that begins to come, we may feel sure that our efforts are beginning to be felt—so, instead of fearing opposition, we may welcome it as a means to an end.